

will forever be a part of our history, they will always be in our prayers and our thoughts go out to their families. Yet, thanks be to God, every one of the 850 soldiers who deployed from Fort Riley as part of the division headquarters returned safely, despite repeated rocket attacks on our bases, ambushes against our vehicles, hundreds of hours in aerial flight, and the harsh conditions of extreme heat, Biblical dust storms, and unforgiving military equipment.

These are the soldiers who developed the intelligence to defeat the enemy networks so that they found no sanctuary.

These are the soldiers who planned the operations to provide the surveillance that supported the Iraqis who then, on their own, arrested the violent extremists and who taught the Iraqi investigators and the judges how to gather evidence that led to convictions under the rule of law.

These are the soldiers who established the satellite communications to reach everywhere even places where no other Army unit has been able to extend communications.

These are the soldiers who determined which Iraqis we should develop relationships with to gain influence, who committed money like a weapons system to change the environment around us, who determined which projects should receive our attention and fought for successful completion and closure of 628 separate projects.

And these are the soldiers who planned and executed the drawdown ending operation Iraqi Freedom, beginning operation New Dawn, including the movement of 1,200 trucks, 14,000 separate pieces of equipment, \$286 million dollars worth of U.S. property, responsibly moved out of the country of Iraq and the closure of 30 of 58 military bases in southern Iraq in only 6 months, including the conversion of a former prison complex into a logistics city for commercial enterprises to establish themselves.

These are the soldiers who created through their own initiative a program and center for building resilience even while deployed.

What a legacy to have been left by 800 Americans.

Ladies and gentlemen, these soldiers have truly added to the illustrious history of the Big Red 1 and have earned these decorations Command Sergeant Major Champagne and I affixed to the Colors and I would ask you please join me in a round of applause for these warriors.

Iraq is on the pathway to becoming sovereign, stable and self-reliant and we helped them have a chance. Now we are home and our attention is turned to rejoining our friends and loved ones—on building our resilience—and finally on our Fort Riley 2015 Campaign Plan which continues to move forward. We will address all of these with the same vigor, reunited and energized by the growth we have all experienced over the last 12 months. Exciting times await us. Forward the Big Red One.

Thank you again for joining us today. May God continue to bless you all and may his protection be with those who remain deployed and upon their families.

Duty First.

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRESIDENT'S TALK WITH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, President Obama talked with the chamber of commerce yesterday. I think that was a good step, but talk and rhetoric are not policy and not action. It is reported that he received applause from two different lines, and he got that in a 35-minute address, which is a bit unusual.

It does appear the President understands he has a serious problem with the job-creating community and is willing to at least meet with people. But the problem really is policy and action. I am disappointed he has not gone further to deal, in a realistic way, with the job problems this Nation has.

He talked about lowering corporate taxes but not reducing the burden of government borne by these companies. In other words, he talked about lowering the rate through eliminating loopholes, and some of the loopholes, I am sure, are not justified. Some of them may be very effective in helping us to be competitive and create growth, not just eliminating those and making it appear that the corporate tax burden has been reduced.

I talked to the chamber of commerce and businesspeople, and they tell me we are in a competitive world environment, and businesses decide where to make products and hire workers based on the cost of doing business in that area. A CEO in North America, for an international company in my home State, told me: We thought we were going to add 200 jobs—at an Alabama plant that he oversees to make a chemical product. But his headquarter company in Europe said: No, after considering taxes, we are not going to build that plant in Alabama. It is going to be in a foreign country. In other words, they had won the competition on costs. Another country with lower tax rates on a corporation had won the bid. The idea that you can have a high tax rate is not good.

We have the highest tax rate in the developed world—as soon as Japan brings theirs down, which they are planning to do, then we will be the highest corporate tax country in the world. This makes us less competitive, and it creates fewer jobs. Simply to eliminate loopholes and bring it down from 35 to the high twenties, as apparently is being discussed, does not reduce the burden of taxes on corporations. Many of our corporations are going to have a significant increase in their tax rates, and they will be less able to hire workers. This is a major issue that I think we have to confront. It is a competitiveness issue.

The President continued to talk, as he did in the State of the Union, about more investment spending. We don't have the money to do more spending. I am disappointed that he has not begun to realize that the day is over that we can just waltz in with a lot of good ideas for new spending programs. He continued to talk about spending and

the role of democracy in this region and key industries at a time when we need to streamline regulations that are killing jobs in America. He did not call for a vigorous and realistic plan to reduce spending.

I appreciate the opportunity to speak. I appreciate the President beginning to enter into a dialog with the folks who create jobs. I am not suggesting that we need to reduce corporate rates to be nice to corporations. I do not have any grief to bear to try to make it somehow easier for corporate executives to make big amounts of money.

What I do understand is if we overtax American corporations, they will move other places. Canada is looking to reduce its corporate tax rate to 16 percent. If we are at 35 percent and Canada goes to 16, will that not be a factor in us losing jobs in competition with Canada? We have to defend our interests.

I see the distinguished majority leader. I know he is busy.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period for the transaction of morning business, with Senators allowed to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO STAN ISRAEL

• Mr. REED. Mr. President, today I pay tribute to an outstanding Rhode Islander, a Vietnam veteran, and champion of workers' rights and justice in the workplace who retired after 35 years of service—my friend, Stan Israel.

After serving two tours in Vietnam, Stan began working for the Service Employees International Union, SEIU, in 1974, first as an organizer with Local 1199, covering New York and Long Island. Stan represented health employees in hospitals and nursing homes organizing employees around workplace safety and fair wages. Then, in 1983, after a short stay in neighboring Connecticut, Stan moved to Rhode Island to head the New England District of SEIU, where he recently retired as executive director.

For nearly three decades, Stan led Rhode Island's second largest union, which represents hard-working health care employees at hospitals across my State and hundreds of nursing and community health centers as well. Stan is a man of principle, good judgment, and great character. Moreover, he has been an unmatched advocate for the social and economic concerns of those in greatest need.